

Message Text

SECRET

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ORIGIN SS-15

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 CCO-00 (ISO) R

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DRAFTED BY NEA:AEGRIFIN:MAR

APPROVED BY NEA:AEGRIFIN

S/S-O:DMACK

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO USDEL SECRETARY IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T STATE 014057 TOSEC 010018

EXDIS FOR DAY

FOL RPT AMMAN 305 ACTION SECSTATE INFO BEIRUT DAMASCUS
CAIRO DTD 20 JAN.

QUOTE

S E C R E T AMMAN 0305

EXDIS

DEPARTMENT PASS SECRETARY'S PARTY

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, LE, XF

SUBJECT: TALK WITH KING -- LEBANON

REF: STATE 013817, BEIRUT 0365, CAIRO 0214, STATE 013832

SUMMARY: KING DEEPLY DISTURBED AND PREOCCUPIED WITH
DETERIORATING SITUATION IN LEBANON. HAS BEEN IN TOUCH
WITH SYRIA AND EXPECTS TO VISIT DAMASCUS AND SEE ASAD
TOMORROW ABOUT PROBLEM. SAW SOME HOPEFUL SIGNS THAT
SYRIANS AND OTHER PUTTING PRESSURE ON KARAME TO STAY.
SAID HE THOUGHT FRANGIEH WOULD ACCEPT SYRIAN FIVE

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POINTS ADDED THAT CHAMOUN WAS BEING PARTICULARLY

DIFFICULT AFTER PAST COOPERATION WITH SYRIAN AND WOULD TALK WITH ASAD AND CONSIDER TRYING TO CONTACT CHAMOUN IN LIGHT OF HIS CONVERSATIONS II DAMASCUS. KING DISTURBED BY RUMORS OF ISRAELI REENFORCEMENT IN THE NORTH AND BY PUBLIC ATTITUDE OF CAIRO WHICH SEEMS TO HIM TO BE TRYING TO OUTDO SYRIANS IN SUPPORT OF PALESTINAIANS. KING ASKED IF SECRETARY HAD ANY THOUGHTS FOR HIM PRIOR TO HIS MEETING JANUARY 21 WITH ASAD. END SUMMARY.

1. JANUARY 20 DISCUSSION WITH KING HUSSEIN FOCUSED MAINLY ON LEBANON. HE TOLD ME THAT YESTERDAY HAD BEEN A TRYING DAY. CALBES HAD COME IN FROM BEIRUT, DAMASCUS AND ELSEWHERE IN THE AREA PAINTING A VERY CONFUSED, DETERIORATING SITUATION. LATE IN THE DAY HE HAD GOTTEN IN TOUCH WITH DAMASCUS AND SUGGESTED A MEETING WITH PRESIDENT ASAD. ASAD HAD NOT REPLEID UNTIL THE SMALL HOURS OF THIS MORNING AND MEETING IS NOW SET FOR AROUND NOON, JANUARY 21.

2. IN THE ABSENCE OF RESPONSE TO MY REQUEST, (STATE 013832 RECEIVED HERE AFTER MY MEETING) I DID NOT USE BACKGROUND CABLE DIRECTLY (STATE 013817), BUT DID REVIEW WITH KING A NUMBER OF THE DEVELOPMENTS DISCUSSED THERE AS A SERIES OF MY PERSONAL THOUGHTS ON THE SITUATION.

3. HE SAID HE APPRECIATED THE REVIEW. HE HIMSELF HAD HAD A NUMBER OF DIFFERENT REPORTS WHICH HE WANTED TO GO OVER WITH ME.

4. FROM LEBANON HE HAD HEARD THAT THERE WERE CONTINUING EFFORTS BY THE SYRIANS AND OTHERS TO BRING KARAME BACK INTO COMMUNICATION WITH FRANJIEH AND TO KEEP THE PRESSURE ON KARAME TO WITHDRAW HIS RESIGNATION. FURTHER KING SAID THAT HE THOUGHT THAT FRANGIEH WAS NOW AT THE POINT OF HIMSELF ACCEPTING THE SYRIAN FIVE POINTS, BUT HE THOUGHT THAT CHAMOUN WAS THE HOLDOUT. I USED THIS OPPORTUNITY TO RAISE WITH HIM THE HOPE EXPRESSED IN AMBASSADOR GODLEY'S CABLE (BEIRUT 0365) THAT HE COULD COMMUNICATE SOME OF HIS OWN IDEAS DIRECTLY TO CHAMOUN. THE KING SAID HE HAD BEEN IN TOUCH WITH CHAMOUN AND WOULD TRY TO DO SO AGAIN, BUT WOULD WAIT BEFORE
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GETTING IN TOUCH AGAIN UNTIL HE SEES ASAD TOMMORROW TO SEE WHAT THEY CAN WORK OUT TOGETHER ON A COORDINATED BASIS.

5. FROM DAMASCUS KING HAS HAD REPORTS THAT THERE ARE INCREASING NUMBERS OF SAIQA FORCES CROSSING THE BORDER INTO LEBANON. THIS WORRIES HIM AND HE HAS CONTINUED TO COUNSEL RESTRAINT ON THE PART OF THE SYRIANS. I ASKED

HIM IF HE COULD CONFIRM THE RATHER IMPROBABLE REPORT PUT OUT BY CHAMOUN THIS MORNING THAT LARGE NUMBERS OF WELL AND HEAVILY ARMED "SYRIAN" FORCES HAD CROSSED OVER INTO LEBANON. HE SAID NO HE COULD NOT AND RATHER DOUBTED THE EXTREME ASPECTS OF THE REPORT, BUT WAS NOT SO SURE FROM HIS OWN EXPERIENCE IN 1970 THAT THE SYRIANS AND THE PLA TOGETHER COULD NOT FIELD SOME REALLY SIGNIFICANT NUMBERS OF TROOPS -- HE MENTIONED BRIGADES. HE ALSO SAID THAT PLA AND SYRIANS WOULD HAVE NO TECHNICAL OR PERSONNEL PROBLEMS OPERATING ARMORED VEHICLES OR ARTILLERY INTO LEBANON. BUT HE ADDED HE HAD NO WAY OF CONFIRMING IT, BUT HE SUSPECTED THAT SYRIANS HAD MOVED MORE FORCES INTO LEBANON IN LAST SEVERAL DAYS.

6. WITH REGARD TO CAIRO, KING SAID HE IS INCREASINGLY DISTURBED BY PUBLIC STATEMENTS WHICH SEEM TO BE DESIGNED TO BE MORE RADICAL IN THEIR SUPPORT OF PALESTINIANS THAN THE SYRIANS. HE DESPARED OF A COMPETITION DEVELOPING IN THIS AREA. I WAS ABLE ALSO TO GIVE HIM A VERY BRIEF FILL IN ON THE MOOD IN CAIRO EARLIER THIS MONTH ON THE BASIS OF CAIRO 0214. HE SAID HE APPRECIATED THIS VERY MUCH AS IT ADDED A NEW PERSPECTIVE. SINCE THE JORDANIANS ARE KNOWN NOT TO BE VERY FOND OF FAHMY IN ANY EVENT, HE ASKED IF THE FOREIGN MINISTER WAS IN CHARGE OF LEBANESE QUESTIONS (I DID NOT MENTION NAMES.) I ONLY INDICATED IN RESPONSE THAT HE SEEMED TO BE ONE OF THE EGYPTIANS TAKING A NEGATIVE POSITION TOWARD FURTHER INVOLVEMENT-- INCLUDING ARAB EFFORTS TO SOLVE THE CONTROVERSY.

FROM TEL AVIV KING SAYS THERE ARE RUMORS REACHING HIM OF MILITARY MOVEMENTS IN NORTHERN ISRAEL. HE CHARACTERIZED THESE AS ONLY "RUMORS". HE SAID SO MUCH OF THE AREA IS STIRRING WITH RUMORS AT THE MOMENT THAT HE FINDS IT

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DIFFICULT TO SORT OUT THE RELIABLE REPORTS.

7. KING SAID HE HOPES HE CAN BE A MODERATING AND HELPFUL INFLUENCE IN SYRIAN TOMORROW. HE ASKED IF SECRETARY HAD ANY THOUGHTS OR IDEAS THAT HE COULD BEAR IN MIND WHEN TALKING TO ASAD AND SAID HE WOULD BE GRATEFUL FOR ANYTHING WE MIGHT HAVE TO PASS ON. I SAID I WOULD STAY IN CLOSE TOUCH AND LET HIM KNOW.

8. ACTION REQUESTED: IF THERE IS ANY MESSAGE FOR THE KING, IT SHOULD BE TIMED TO ARRIVE PRIOR TO HIS DEPARTURE FOR DAMASCUS BETWEEN 10:00AM AND 11:00 AM JANUARY 21 LOCAL TIME.

PICKERING

UNQUOTE KISSINGER

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: TOSEC, TROOP DEPLOYMENT, INTERVENTION, DIPLOMATIC DISCUSSIONS, POLITICAL SITUATION
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 20 JAN 1976
Decaption Date: 28 MAY 2004
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: KelleyW0
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976STATE014057
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: AEGRIFIN:MAR
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760021-0740
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19760140/aaaabjjj.tel
Line Count: 169
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ORIGIN SS
Original Classification: SECRET
Original Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 4
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: SECRET
Previous Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Reference: 76 STATE 13817, 76 BEIRUT 365, 76 CAIRO 214, 76 STATE 13832
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: KelleyW0
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 07 JUN 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <07 JUN 2004 by BoyleJA>; APPROVED <05 OCT 2004 by KelleyW0>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: TALK WITH KING -- LEBANON
TAGS: PFOR, JO, XF, US, LE, (PICKERING, THOMAS R), (HUSSEIN I)
To: SECRETARY
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006